MINUTES OF THE NEW SERVICE MODELS “LITERATURES AND LANGUAGES” TEAM MEETING OF DECEMBER 9, 2009

Present: Robert Cagle, Miles Efron, Dara Goldman, JoAnn Jacoby, Doug Kibbee, Kathleen Kluegel, Curtis Perry, Bruce Swann, Caroline Szylowicz, John Wagstaff (Team Leader; Minute taker), Charles Wright

1. Minutes of the Team’s December 2 meeting were approved with one amendment, and will be posted on the Team’s website as soon as possible.

2. Today’s agenda. John asked that we further refine the draft report as circulated in two versions (by John and Kathleen), plus the amendments proposed by Charlie, Doug, Miles, and Robert. He also outlined what will happen next, i.e.: there will be an open meeting on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, from 10.15-11.30 a.m. in room 66 of Main Library. The Team’s draft report will be circulated in advance of this meeting. John will send out the draft, plus an invitation to attend the meeting, as soon as possible. Team members were also reminded to tell their colleagues and others that they are welcome to attend. John will also send the draft report to the Library’s Executive Committee in advance of the Open Meeting, emphasizing that it is a draft that may well be changed on the basis of comments at that Meeting.

3. Review of latest version of draft report. Kathleen explained that she had already tried to incorporate into her latest draft those comments that had been received since the draft was issued. Doug and Charlie are content that their comments have been incorporated appropriately. Robert’s comment – to leave one passage as in the draft, rather than accepting a revision from John – was also agreed upon.

Kathleen then initiated an extended discussion about the survey, especially in regard to using the figures (percentages, etc.) as compared simply with drawing on individuals’ verbal comments. She questioned whether the word “survey” itself was appropriate to describe the exercise that had been undertaken. Others disagreed: Miles was concerned that we be careful not to cherry pick results to affirm any preconceptions. Doug pointed out that the survey had no pretence to be some sort of “gallup poll”, but that, for example, saying “40% of our 81 respondents said that…”: this was not mis-representing anything. We have shown our sensitivity to the constituencies that the library serves by undertaking this survey, and we owe it to those who responded to include some things from it in the report. Curtis made the point that we should assume that those who did respond feel themselves to be stakeholders in the process.

The Team eventually decided to include the full survey “instrument”, and full survey results, in the appendices to its draft report; but also to refer to specific findings, where appropriate, in footnotes to the report. Putting figures and comments in the main narrative threatens to stall the narrative. Some material regarding the survey results will be pulled out of last week’s Minutes. John had also included some figures in his earlier draft report, so maybe there is material there too.

4. Other matters

(i) Caroline was not happy about the language in the report concerning the Kolb-Proust Archive. She will send some new text for the draft report. It was also agreed that this text will be moved to section (2) of the report from its current rather awkward location.
(ii) Charlie suggested that we should express a strong preference for the new unit having the offices in room 227. This was agreed, and will be added to the draft report.

(iii) Charlie also noted that there is nothing in the draft about a name for the new unit. He proposed “Literatures and Languages Library”, as we discussed on December 2, and this was agreed. It will be added to the report.

(iv) Several team members also proposed moving some passages in the draft report from one place to another. John will coordinate this, and invited comments.

(v) There was also a feeling that the draft report should specifically try to address items 3(a) and 3(b) of the Team’s charge. Some language will be added to the draft report.

(vi) It was noted that there is no mention currently of classroom space in the new unit. It was felt that, if 227 was available, a library instruction space would be much more viable. If possible, the current Slavic Conference Room space should be made exclusively available to the new unit. (Or, at least, maybe the new unit should be made responsible for arranging bookings of the space?) JoAnn is concerned about claiming exclusive use of one of the a few spaces available for Library meetings and suggested that it would be very convenient for the unit regardless.

(vii) Current seating in English and Modern Languages Library units: there are currently around 104 seats available in the present two units (40 in Modern Languages and Linguistics, 64 in English).

(viii) We may want to include some sort of statement in our draft report concerning what our “vision” is. John will write something, and send it out to the Team.